

Appl. No. : 09/658,784
Filed : September 11, 2000

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

The paragraph starting at page 16, line 13 has been amended as follows:

The elevator mechanism moves the second elevator plate 402 between an outside position where the wafer carrier 50 is located outside the load lock 400 (see Figure 11A) and a sealed position where the wafer carrier 50 is located within the load lock 400 (see Figure 11B). In this sealed position, the second elevator plate 402 substantially closes the load lock port 34. Preferably, the second elevator plate 402 includes a sealing portion 406 [206], which cooperates with a corresponding sealing portion 408 formed on the load lock 400 to substantially seal the load lock port 34.

In the Claims:

Claims 1-5, 9, 14, 18-20, 57, 60 and 67 have been amended as follows:

1. (TWICE AMENDED) A load lock as in Claim 7, wherein said wafer carrier [that defines at least partially a first chamber and an auxiliary chamber, said load lock comprising:

a first port and a second port, said first and second ports for moving a wafer into and out of said load lock;

an elevator plate including a wafer carrier that is adapted for receiving a plurality of wafers and] is attached to said elevator plate[; and

said wafer carrier and said elevator plate being moveable between a first position where said wafer carrier is in said first chamber and a second position where said wafer carrier is in said auxiliary chamber and said elevator plate substantially seals said auxiliary chamber from said first chamber].

2. (TWICE AMENDED) A load lock as set forth in Claim 7 [1], wherein said load lock is formed at least in part by a first housing portion and an auxiliary housing portion that is removably coupled to said first housing portion.

3. (AMENDED) A load lock as set forth in Claim 7 [1], wherein said wafer carrier is adapted for receiving only a pair of wafers.

4. (AMENDED) A load lock as set forth in Claim 7 [1], wherein said wafer carrier includes at least an unload position and a load position.

5. (AMENDED) A load lock as set forth in Claim 7 [1], wherein said wafer carrier is located on top of said elevator plate.

9. (AMENDED) A load lock that defines at least partially a first chamber and an auxiliary chamber, said load lock comprising:

a first port and a second port, said first and second ports for moving a wafer into and out of said load lock;

an elevator plate including a wafer carrier that is adapted for receiving a plurality of wafers and is attached to said elevator plate; and

said wafer carrier and said elevator plate being moveable between a first position where said wafer carrier is in said first chamber and a second position where said wafer carrier is in said auxiliary chamber and said elevator plate substantially seals said auxiliary chamber from said first chamber. [A load lock as set forth in Claim 1,] wherein said first port opens into said first chamber and said second port opens into said auxiliary chamber.

14. (THRICE AMENDED) A load lock that defines at least partially a first chamber and an auxiliary chamber, said load lock comprising:

a first port and a second port, said first and second ports for moving a wafer into and out of said load lock;

an elevator plate including a wafer carrier that is adapted for receiving a plurality of wafers and is attached to said elevator plate; and

said wafer carrier and said elevator plate being moveable between a first position where said wafer carrier is in said first chamber and a second position where said wafer carrier is in said auxiliary chamber and said elevator plate substantially seals said auxiliary chamber from said first chamber. [A load lock as set forth in Claim 1,] wherein said first port is configured to receive said wafer carrier and said wafer carrier and said elevator plate being moveable between an outside position where said wafer carrier is outside said load lock and an inside position wherein said wafer carrier is inside said load lock.

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18. (AMENDED) A load lock as set forth in Claim 7 [1], wherein said auxiliary chamber includes inner walls that are adapted to withstand an auxiliary fluid.

19. (TWICE AMENDED) A load lock as set forth in Claim 7, [that defines at least partially a first chamber and an auxiliary chamber, said load lock comprising:

a first port and a second port, said first and second ports for moving a wafer into and out of said load lock;

an elevator plate including a wafer carrier that is adapted for receiving a plurality of wafers; and

said wafer carrier being moveable between a first position where said wafer carrier is in said first chamber and a second position where said wafer carrier is in said auxiliary chamber and said elevator plate substantially seals said auxiliary chamber from said first chamber,] wherein said auxiliary chamber includes inner walls that are adapted to withstand an auxiliary fluid and wherein said auxiliary fluid comprises HF vapor.

20. (AMENDED) A load lock as set forth in Claim 7 [1], wherein said load lock further includes heating elements.

57. (TWICE AMENDED) A system for processing substrates, comprising
a load lock chamber including a lower portion having a first inner width and an upper portion attached to the lower portion and having a narrower second inner width, the chamber including a first port and a second port, each of the ports sized to pass substrates therethrough, the load lock chamber further comprising a moveable platform configured to support at least one substrate thereon and sized to have a width less than the first inner width and greater than the second inner width to enable selectively sealing the upper portion with the at least one substrate supported thereon;

an auxiliary processing system selectively communicating with an opening in the upper chamber;

a substrate handling chamber selectively communicating with the load lock chamber through the first port; and

at least one process chamber selectively communicating with the substrate handling chamber, wherein the load lock chamber selectively communicates with a clean room environment through the second port and the first port is located in the lower portion.

60. (AMENDED) A system for processing substrates, comprising
a load lock chamber including a lower portion having a first inner width and an upper portion attached to the lower portion and having a narrower second inner width, the chamber including a first port and a second port, each of the ports sized to pass substrates therethrough, the load lock chamber further comprising a moveable platform configured to support at least one substrate thereon and sized to have a width less than the first inner width and greater than the second inner width to enable selectively sealing the upper portion with the at least one substrate supported thereon;

an auxiliary processing system selectively communicating with an opening in the upper chamber;

a substrate handling chamber selectively communicating with the load lock chamber through the first port; and

at least one process chamber selectively communicating with the substrate handling chamber, wherein the load lock chamber selectively communicates with a clean room environment through the second port, the first port is located in the lower portion and [The system of Claim 59, wherein] the second port is located in the lower portion.

67. (AMENDED) A system for processing substrates, comprising
a load lock chamber including a lower portion having a first inner width and an upper portion attached to the lower portion and having a narrower second inner width, the chamber including a first port and a second port, each of the ports sized to pass substrates therethrough, the load lock chamber further comprising a moveable platform configured to support at least one substrate thereon and sized to have a width less than the first inner width and greater than the second inner width to enable selectively sealing the upper portion with the at least one substrate supported thereon;

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an auxiliary processing system selectively communicating with an opening in the upper chamber;

a substrate handling chamber selectively communicating with the load lock chamber through the first port; and

at least one process chamber selectively communicating with the substrate handling chamber, [The system of Claim 57,] wherein said first port opens into said upper chamber and said second port opens into said lower chamber.

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